

Ria's Corner

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Precious family and friends,

We pray this finds you in good health and with daily reasons for gratitude and rejoicing.

Imagine it is a year since we went to South Africa, two years since the horse bit me, and just a month ago when Jim Watt, our precious friend, succumbed to his pancreatic cancer. We miss him so much already! In his youth and for many years he had been a faithful Episcopalian priest, but just before he turned 80 he became a Seventh-day Adventist.

Recently our beautiful adopted granddaughter, Casey Lao, graduated as an RN from Southwestern University and about two weeks ago left to do mission work among the many unreached people of the Philippines! We are so happy and proud of her. Our local Senior Ministry in Edinburg helps her financially. Please pray for her and all missionaries, as well as all seniors. Being old is not for sissies!

Thank you so much for the concerned calls and prayers during the rampage of Hurricane Harvey 400 miles away, without a single raindrop splashing down here. Pray for its victims as well as those of Irma, that not a single hair of those who trust in Him will be touched, according to His promise. Fires out of control rage in the west of the country and we see clearly that this world is not our home! South Africa is so dry that water has to be brought into certain areas by big water tankers! God allows Satan to harass the inhabitants of the world for their wickedness, while at the same time showing great loving-kindness, which is new every morning to those who keep their eyes on Him.

Here in the Texas lower Rio Grande Valley all trees not flood irrigated look tired and wilted. Many large ones have died, their gaunt skeletons pointing at the sky or drooping. We ourselves lost a few and at the moment have a large half dead hackberry. We are sorry for all the birds that lose their leafy retreat, especially since the hunting season of white-tailed doves is here again, which I hate. This is not, of course, anything near the calamitous proportion of King Nebuchadnezzar's tree dream, and thankfully our citrus bravely produced a bumper crop of smallish but sweet fruit, while many branches died off. I have never had such a neglected garden in my life.

But, thank the Lord, after too many months of suffering I at last have a date for my back surgery, namely tomorrow, September 14, at Mission Regional Medical Center. Carl's wife, Shelley, has most graciously offered to take time off work to help with seeing me through the day, knowing I do not look, see, or hear so well. She used to be a paramedic and was with me before and after the horse bite surgery. Please pray for all aspects surrounding this: a successful operation, money for the co-pays, and practical help from local friends in our home and garden—since my poor husband has spinal scoliosis, an unfixable back problem. I cannot stand by helplessly while my dry garden dies completely. A sister in South Africa donated \$100.00 for hiring help if necessary. God bless her richly!

We were most fortunate to have a visit from our son André and his daughter Rose for the last half of August. Now they are safely back in California, where fires are raging again. What a world! On their last day he took us to our favorite buffet, and then it hit me like a ton of bricks: at 62, my son is a senior, too! No wonder I sometimes feel so old-fashioned.

We are delighted to say that Edwin is now busy on the final chapter of his Esperanto epic, *La Konflikto de la Epokoj* (The Conflict of the Ages), dealing with the time when Jesus will return to earth with the redeemed after a thousand years in heaven, His feet touches the Mount of Olives, which becomes a huge plain on which the glorious New Jerusalem settles down. When Satan sees all those billions of resurrected subjects, he sets into motion his plans for their war effort against the holy city, which he tells them really belongs to him. Compared to his multitude of subjects, those in the city do seem easy to overpower... This is wonderful stuff to think about and work on finishing.

Meantime you and I have to proclaim the three angels' messages of Revelation 14, so that Jesus can come as promised in John 14:1-3. Edwin asks God for time to finish this epic on which he has worked for fifty-eight years. When completed, *La Konflikto* will run to about 380 pages, more than John Milton's *Paradise Lost* plus *Paradise Regained*. It will either be a dud or a masterpiece of world literature. Edwin says he does not believe in producing duds.

After that, by God's grace, he will be ready to communicate with you himself through a Prophetic Bulletin.

Californian Retrospect

In our last Prophetic Bulletin, we mentioned a forthcoming trip to California for the graduation of our grandson, Edwin, Jr., from Loma Linda Medical School, as well as his wedding immediately afterwards on memorial day. That now lies in the past, with other lovely memories. We hope our readers received a letter from *Ria's Corner*, dated 9 July 2017, with reports about these and other events. This material is also available on www.propheticum.com, our website.

Our ASI Visit to Houston, August 2-5

This was a wonderful first-time experience, especially since it was Adventist Laymen's and Service Industries' 70th anniversary! The venue was the George R. Brown Convention Center in downtown Houston, here in Texas. Unfortunately we cannot afford to be members of this organization and had to pay more than \$50.00 apiece to be allowed into their exhibition hall as attendees, except on the Sabbath after sunset. Yet we had to be there to pick up boxes of Edwin's books from a distributor friend, who had brought them from another state. Our precious Henry Stubbs of World Youth Group, which works in Cuba, met us at the parking area and paid the steep entrance money in a heartbeat. We promised to reimburse him when we have sold some books. By God's wonderful providence, accommodation was provided by our beautiful brother Elias Manyazewal from Ethiopia, who lived an hour away from the venue. He cheerfully provided transport to and from the Convention Center, since he knows the city well.

On Thursday we went exploring and visited many booths. Edwin and I hobbled around slowly with our walking canes and were happy to see a few old friends from the General Conference session at San Antonio two years ago.

There was a strong denominational presence, but most exhibitors were supporting ministries, as they are now called, especially the ones that draw thousands of dollars in gifts from those who view their telecasts. Very prominent was 3ABN, which had lovely freebies. Danny Shelton and helpers, who videotaped the proceedings for his television station, took

time to be photographed with admirers and then rushed off to be recorded with various exhibitors, who had chairs ready for them and had been scheduled by Dee Hildebrand.

There were also many small exhibits with clear plans and prospectuses for many mission outreach efforts in a number of countries through various media, including schools, music lessons for the poor . . . you name it.

As expected, Henry Stubbs was at his booth of the World Youth Group. At another booth, we obtained a booklet containing Ellen G. White's counsel about doing a special work for the Jews. I must admit I felt a bit bowled over by the superabundance of mostly unknown, energetic Seventh-day Adventists thronged together.

It was exciting to see Andy and Naomi Weaver again. These are Amishes who converted to our Church about two years ago. We had an exciting visit with this large family when Edwin was a speaker at the Forward to Zion camp meeting! Now they showed nice architectural drawings for the West Salem Mission School among the Amishes of Ohio. These need good schools even more than ordinary people do because they are normally not easy to penetrate due to their shunning habit.

It was also wonderful to see Home Base Television from South Africa. We spoke Afrikaans to Pastors Reinhardt Stander and Eben de Jager. We had met them in South Africa last year when Reinhardt royally hosted us in his home and Eben interviewed Edwin for their ministry. They are praying for a few American donors. Their telecasts cover most of Africa and southern Europe. In its exchange rate, their South African currency, on which our pensions are also based, has a tendency to fluctuate wildly when those in power rock the boat even slightly. Nowadays they are also talking of confiscating the farms of white people without any compensation, as Mugabe did in Zimbabwe . . .

Though we did not have our own exhibit booth, two other ministries kindly allowed us to leave placards and books with them in the hope of selling some. We personally handed out many flyers and even books but were able to sell only one copy! It was clear that each ministry was there for its own agenda and attendees wanted everything free of charge. I did have one ministry pray over me, thank God. We also learned many ways of not manning a booth, and for that we are also grateful. Elias had me take pictures of him and some of his "stars" there, and rescued me from time to time when I got lost among the multitude of booths, and the distances seemed too great. Bless him!

Because we were the smallest presence there, it unfortunately gave me a double grasshopper complex. I first thought of the report to Moses uttered by ten spies after surveying Canaan: "We saw the giants, the sons of Anak, who come of the giants. And we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight" (Numbers 13:33). Then I also remembered the Afrikaans translation of Ecclesiastes 12:5, which says that the grasshopper would drag itself along with difficulty. Fortunately this particular grasshopper at least had a blue walking stick!

On Sabbath morning, with my back troubling me, I had too much pain to go anywhere, and Edwin stayed with me. Elias went alone to the Conventional Center and enjoyed it. I was so sorry to miss the energy of such a meeting! I was also interested in the afternoon thanksgiving session, but a misprint in the program made it look like an uninterrupted stint of four hours. This I could not possibly endure, especially since traveling to and from the center required an additional two hours. So Edwin and Elias attended what turned out to be a fantastic two hours. It focused on the 70-year history of ASI, featuring various speakers. Two of them were Mark Finley and General Conference president Ted Wilson. Edwin and Elias also heard that over \$2 million had been raised for different projects. Thank God that not all

rich Adventists spend their money only on themselves! We hope Henry and Arleen Stubbs will also get some for their work in Cuba, since they have sunk their own private funds into finishing the work there.

Incidentally, the same George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston also became a haven of refuge for many Harvey survivors whose homes had been flooded and destroyed. Please pray for the victims of that terrible devastation and of Irma, which has just ravaged Florida. Our loved ones in California also have relatives there. The hurricane season is far from over. “This world is not my home; I’m just a-passing through!”

Shortchanging Norman Gulley

Every once in a while I dip into *The Church and the Last Things*, Volume 4, of Dr. Norman R. Gulley’s *Systematic Theology*. It is a must-read book. He is the greatest systematic theologian of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This set of four works is printed by Andrews University Press. I love and warmly recommend *The Church and the Last Things* to anyone who sincerely wants to know the real Bible truth about end-time events.

Though I had many college courses in theology, including a major in Biblical Studies with the University of South Africa, I was fascinated by his term “Replacement Theology.” He shows how Catholicism has replaced virtually everything that God has commanded with something else. Just recently into my mind there flashed two shocking pictures from what I had picked up from the book. Christ, instead of having suffered for us **once for all**, and sitting at the right hand of the Father, interceding as our high priest, can—according to Catholic belief—be jerked from heaven many times every day. A human, earthly priest somewhere wants to serve the wafer (the cookie god) to somebody, and so Jesus allows Himself to become real flesh and blood for that purpose!

The other picture concerns their invention of purgatory. It is a word and an idea not to be found in the Bible at all. According to the Roman Church, it is a most dreadful place. Norman imagines it as a looong, biiigg car wash. Just think of it! The person dies in a big muddy mess and then is whisked off to this car wash, where after a long time, perhaps even half drowned, he or she arrives sparkling clean in heaven to be welcomed by Mary. So, according to a false belief that leads to impenitence and perdition, everybody has a second chance, and all Catholics can one day go to heaven by confessing to a priest. Unfortunately that is definitely not so, but Satan does not mind how many lies he tells and wants all whom he possibly can deceive to be confused and lost forever. To him the more is definitely the merrier!

Norman Gulley’s masterpieces can be bought from Andrews University Press, and probably the local ABC. Volume 4 has, according to the book itself, been recommended by both Dr. Gerard Damsteegt and Dr. JoAnn Davidson of the Andrews University Seminary. But on the website of Andrews University Press both Damsteegt and Davidson have been omitted. We also noticed that the fulsome praise for Gulley by other eminent theologians, not of our denomination, has been strangely muted or totally eliminated. I am just wondering why. Does the Andrews University Press not want to sell as many copies of his truth-filled book which deals with end-time events as possible? When Edwin spoke to Norman about these glaring discrepancies, his reaction was, “Let it go.”

Is the Shelf Life of a Lie so Much Longer Than that of Truth?

Four centuries ago, William Shakespeare wrote: "The evil that men do lives after them; The good is oft interrèd with their bones." Who would have imagined that the repeated assertions by the late Dr. B. in his newsletters that two professors at Andrews were the greatest prophetic expositors of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, in order to sell their books as well as his own, would have such a lasting effect? They now have become leading scholars at two of our universities. One of them has apparently been tasked with heading the study of the book of Revelation for the new SDA Bible Commentary! Can anybody please tell me that this is not so?

Stuff Happening in Our Beloved Church

No doubt you may also have been troubled by the many winds of strange doctrine and the lack of piety in many of our churches. It looks as if prophecy is now on the back burner or even the ash heap. Historicism (prophecy fulfilled by actual, historically verifiable events) is apparently outmoded and needs to be replaced with more modern methods of interpretation. We heard of pastors explicitly asking visiting preachers not to make statements that could embarrass or frighten any visitors who happen to be attending. They were asked not to refer to beasts in prophecy, or the Spirit of Prophecy, or even quote the Fourth Commandment in full! Some pastors actually seem to be happy to feed the poor sheep dry hay, laced with the arsenic of false beliefs. No wonder we have such sickly congregations!

Apparently at least one scholar even thinks the friendly Jesuit pope may be converted and go to heaven. Even if this were to happen, what about the large number of princes of the church who co-reign with him? The Italian solution (the killing of a pontiff) would at once be applied. This may have happened to the hapless John Paul I, who thought aloud about wanting to fix up some shady financial dealings of the Vatican Bank.

Friends, some of our pastors here, in Italy, Poland, and Hungary are in such ecumenical friendship with the Roman hierarchy that they even worship and eat together, including a specially baked unity cake! Their photos have been displayed on the Internet, as though they were proud of their loving, broadminded, ecumenical approach to the Gospel. Some of them are egged on by their leaders! Will they stand for the truth when Sunday laws are enacted? We thank God for the 7,000 who have not bent the knee to Baal and still lift up the trumpet and loud let it ring!

Adventist World Radio still uses that as its signature tune. Then people scurry to hear the sermon. In the Philippines, God recently brought to view fifteen groups ready for baptism. Some walk miles to get to a store which has a radio! God will eventually call out all His children from Babylon, when the fourth angel of Revelation 18 lightens the earth with his glory, and a voice from heaven will loudly say: "Come out of her, my people!" The Lord still has many children in other churches. Remember, He is mighty to save to the uttermost. Sunday is not, of course the Lord's Sabbath, but that of Antichrist, so Satan wants everybody on earth to worship him on that day. No exception allowed. No place to hide. The true Sabbath is that of Jesus, who made the earth and us and died for us! So who deserves our love and devotion?

Martin Luther came from the Catholic Church, and we are expecting more from there, as well as from the Lord's ancient Jewish people, who are strong on the law of God. We must do a special work for them! It is very late in the day, and prophecy is fulfilling with blinding

rapidity. We read that in Poland the Roman Church is already trying to get all stores to close on Sundays, so that families can be together. There is opposition, but we know it is on the stated agenda of the Pope and that it will eventually be the law all over the world—enforced by America—as the prophetic word says it will be.

Keeping the Reformation Alive

The *Adventist World* recently briefly wrote about a small group in Poland, if I remember correctly, who put on a play about Martin Luther and showed him fixing his thesis against indulgences to their church door. What a wonderful example! Would it not be worth emulating in all our churches? Do you know of anything similar planned in your vicinity?

Fortunately there are some supporting ministries that we know of which are planning something special to celebrate Luther's 500 years: Dr. Walter Veith and also Reinhardt Stander of South Africa undertook and recorded Reformation trips to Germany; Stephen Bohr's *Secrets Unsealed* is planning a weekend at Yosemite near their headquarters on October 25-29 (SecretsUnsealed.org); our Scandinavian Br. Abel Struckness has a website in many languages, including English. New Life Mission has excellent articles on their website nlmoffice@newlifemission1986.org. Recently we got a letter from the Carter Report, in which he warns that the separation between church and state is in jeopardy. If you know of anybody else we would love hearing about them.

This is to protest **loudly** that THE REFORMATION IS NOT DEAD! Please pray for all these ministries. At the ASI Convention, the New Life Mission had a wonderful depiction of the cardinals standing behind a tombstone inscribed with **RIP Reformation**, with the pope officiating. This was very imaginative work by their artist, who was also there with his mom and little one. We thank God that the ATS is planning something at Southern University for the end of this month, where—among others—Historicist Dr. Gerard Damsteegt will present a paper. We so wish we could be there!

The Truth About 666 Book Garners Further Praise

Recently a theology student in Washington State wrote to say that Edwin's *Truth About 666* is the best book on this topic to hit the shelves in a 100 years. But Dr. Gulley, the giant theologian that he is, by quoting from three of Edwin's books extensively, paid him the ultimate compliment. If you have *The Truth About 666*, and do not quite know where to start, begin with Appendix I at the back of Volume 3. This work is really a course in prophecy, accurate history, philosophy, literary devices, and sound exegesis. If you do not have the book yet, please get it ASAP. But it would really be splendid to add Dr. Gulley's works there on your bookshelf, with the Bible and marvelous writings of Ellen G. White. They belong together so naturally and will be avidly read until Jesus comes.

Keeping Our Own History Alive

I have been thinking for a long time how wonderful it would be if we as a Church were more historically aware. According to the Bible, the Israelites were to keep their history alive by repeating the tale of their deliverance from Egypt at least once a year at their festivals. The New Testament tells that this method was followed by Stephen and Paul in their defense

before the Jewish leaders. What can we learn from God's leading in the time of the Bible? All this was written for us upon whom the end of the ages is coming so very fast.

Let us therefore celebrate the Reformation by proclaiming the three angels' messages, instead of joining Babylon. Call out from her all of God's children. How gratifying it would be if some Sabbath sermons could regularly deal with how God has led us in our past! We could show films or at AY do re-enactments not only of the reformers, but also our own pioneers. When last did you hear about how God has led in our history as Seventh-day Adventist Protestants? There are many wonderful DVDs available now, for instance *God's Outlaw* (Luther), and about Wycliffe, Jan Hus, William Miller, the Whites, Joseph Bates, etc. Then there are *Keepers of the Flame*, made in Australia, a wonderful series about our Adventist pioneers, and *The Reformation Rekindled* by Walter Veith and now *Enmity*, both from Amazing Discoveries.

Even the children's stories could be about specific Adventist events, the Great Disappointment with its sequel, and how God has mightily led through his servants. There are so many wonderful mission stories to choose from. Friends, Jeff Reich of Laymen Ministries International tells about his projects in his magazine and videos. In his store, he also has a whole series of children's books, specially written about the great reformers and mission miracles. When I look in Jeff's catalog, I often wish I had the money to buy all those to share with others! Adventist Frontier Missions as well as Adventist World Radio with Jim Ayre's *Making Waves* provide an abundance of inspiring accounts—a veritable modern-day Acts of the Apostles. Jesus wants to come, but we must never forget how He has led in our past. We have been entrusted with the most solemn work ever given to mortals, and this so close to the final events! Let us not sleep and our lamps go out in darkness. And the door be shut!

Website Linkage

More details about Edwin's publications, our activities, and previous Prophetic Bulletins appear on our website: www.propheticum.com. I had hoped to put some biographical pieces on it, but found sitting too painful. I hope to do so ASAP. The site has now been viewed by more than 43,000 people, but now I have a **BIG QUESTION**: Can anybody help us change some views into orders? Please, we need a volunteer to teach an old dog new tricks. The dog is intelligent, but rather old! Please e-mail us at edwdekock@hotmail.com, or snail-mail Edwin de Kock, 12916 Los Terrazos Boulevard, Edinburg, Texas 78541, U.S.A. As a huge favor, kindly help us promote these doctrinally and prophetically sound books through your recommendations, personally or by e-mail. If you have a website, kindly mention us there and supply a link to ours.

Praying for Michael

Our very dear friend and web master, Michael Scheifler, has serious health issues and is, right now, in hospital. Without his assistance, Edwin is technologically incompetent. Please pray for Michael.

We Need Help Urgently

1. Kindly keep on praying for us and let us know that you are doing so. It promotes health.
2. Volunteer to help with advice and/or whatever way you may feel impressed to do.

3. Please make sure you also get *A More Sure Word of Prophecy* for yourself and your best friends, or *La Palabra Profética Más Segura*, the Spanish version, to hand out at your church.

4. Please ask about discounts for larger quantities of books. We are facing steep expenses for my operation.

May our good Lord bless and sustain you richly each moment until Jesus comes.

Lots of love and big hugs, from your forever friends

Ria (and Edwin) ☺